

miko peled
Tape 10

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alright the name of the studio is martial arts america. this is our fifteenth year in business. I started, opened it up originally in San Diego in Northpark. and then uh in a small place and then it grew so we moved to a larger place and then I started getting students from Coronado and then for a while I had 2 studios and then eventually I closed down one in northpark and stayed here in coronado.

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what we teach here is traditional okinawan (sp) karate. It's called okinawan gordru karate (sp). and Its a very old martial arts system. an old traditional okinawan martial arts system. and what weve done is weve taken this martial arts system and adapted it so we can teach kids as young as 4 and 5. and we can teach kids that are older and flip a class which are 10, 8, 9 about those ages, older kids. and then we have a class where we have the teenages and adults and really theyre the ones that learn the real traditional martial arts, the real traditional system. At different levels. we have a beginning, an intermediate, and an advanced level for each one of those age groups. and we have classes here 5 days a week. saturdays we have special events, examinations, things like that. and we have about 250 students. all the way from 4 to i think our, to about 60 or 65.

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well that depends who you ask in the family, if you ask me my sense is im an israli and ill always be an israli. i live in america, im an american citizen, uh i suppose you could hyphenate say israli-american you know. really im an israli, my wife's an israli. although if you ask her she might say something else, im not sure. the kids were born here, so theres no question if they're american. theres no question that they see this as their home. but there is also no question that they understand that they have a special unique kind of heritage. they know that theyre jewish, they know that theyre israli, they speak hebrew, they know who their grandparents are they know who their great grandparents were. they know why its significant for them to know this. um and so they know that they are part something very special and very unique. and they know that thier connection to israel is very special. my oldest son is 10 and hes been to israel probably 12, 13 times. theyre you know youd have to ask them exactly how they would identify themselves, but theyre americans with a very strong israli connection. and they have israli citizenship too.

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my grandpartents came from russia on both sides, all four of them. on my mothers side they are from the kitsnelson (sp) family which if you know anything about um (?) jewish family its kind of like the blue blood. very aristocratic, very well educated. both of them

were doctors when they came and they were very (?) when they came. my grandfather fought in the Russian army. I have a picture of him when he was a young officer with a great big medal that he got from the czar for bravery or something. Um, he was a good friend of Tumpador(?), who was a legend in early Israeli mythology. And um, in fact I think he was sent to what was then Georgia, which now again Georgia, the Republic of Georgia to speak to very wealthy Jewish men I guess support the Zionist enterprise and so forth. And that's where he met my grandmother. She was the eldest daughter of this man. And my grandfather was a Kitznelson (sp) family. My grandmother's last name was Kaplan (sp). He was already a doctor by then she was a little younger, she went to medical school. By the time they arrived in Israel in the mid twenties. And they were both doctors and I think my grandmother was the first I don't know if she was the first woman doctor in Haifa but she definitely was the first dermatologist and then uh she kept working as a doctor her whole life. She retired when she was I think 82 or something like that. She worked all the way through. Uh and my grandfather was involved in the early Zionist enterprise. ?????? by the way, my name is named after him. And he was a member of the first pre-state Jewish government it was called the National Council of (?) and he was in charge of the department of health and physical education. Later on, after the state was declared, he was sent as an ambassador to, he was the first ambassador to, well they had one ambassador to all of Scandinavia. So he was Israel's representative to Scandinavia. And he was the first one. So they lived in Sweden, he and my grandmother lived in Sweden for several years then he got cancer and died in the mid 50's, 55 I think or 56. Um so that's how my mother's side and they lived in Jerusalem they built a house in Jerusalem one of the first houses in (?) where my sister still resides. Um and they lived there, other than when they lived in Sweden, I believe they lived there their whole lives. My mother was born there. Um. And my mother went to school there in Jerusalem. And uh, my father's side was more working class people, they came from, my grandfather was an orphan, I'm not sure what the background is, the last name was Eiflan (sp), which is kind of a little obscure. Nobody really knows much about it. But my grandmother comes from a small settle(?) I think she went to 3 or 4 years of schooling. And she was the second I believe of many many children and her older brother, she was very close to her older brother and then in the, uh after the Bolshevik revolution they decided to become communists. I believe they went to some kind of a communist gathering and at some point they heard that everything is the Jews' fault. And so they figured that communism wasn't going to answer the Jewish, was not going to be an answer for Jews, at that point. Uh, they already suffered (?) and they you know already witnessed all that. Before that when they were much younger. So then they decided to become Zionists and he took her with him and they went to Palestine, and this is also early 20's and I believe that my grandmother met my grandfather on a boat from Turkey to Palestine because they lived in Turkey for a while. For a year I think. Um, and they were part of the legendary, what's called the Duvadava (?) which is the regiment of (?) I guess they went and built roads and did all kinds of manual labor. They were real socialists, real Zionists, real socialists. Um and then they eventually moved to Jerusalem. I think they tried to live in Kirbusk (?) for a while and they way I understood the story was in the Kirbusk the children were separated from the adults. They lived separately and they slept on their own. And you know my grandmother I remember the story where she looked to the window and she saw my father as a baby crying and she couldn't take it. Because you weren't allowed to come and

get them when they cried to make them tough and all that. so then they left and moved to jerusalem. and my grandfather opened a carpentry shop. he was a carpenter. it was quite successful i understand. and they had they had a very a very uh not bohemian lifestyle at all but they attracted a lot of bohemian bealic (?) and Haza's (?) and many of the jews, the poets and the writers of that time were attracted to their, to their home. and so my grandmother, even though she went to school for 3 or 4 years in her life she knew every book in Yidish (sp) ??? by heart. she read bealic (???) she read everything. every single book that had to do with with the jewish and israli culture. she was an avid reader and uh, so they had a very interesting life like that. and they had 2 sons my father was the eldest, and his younger brother dubic (sp) and um and my father when he was only 16 joined ????? and when they thought he was out doing field trips and things like that he was actually doing military training. i suppose today you might call it terrorism, learning how to be a terrorist. fighting the british, throwing rocks all those kinds of things. by the time, and then he was in the Pamack (?) and i think in 1946 he decided to go and study law. so he went to england and was there in london for a year studying law and then the war broke out and then he returned.

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The Hagina was the main jewish militia. it was underground for a while but everyone knew it was there. it was the main stream jewish militia. um and then there were the other 2 more minor groups. and then the pama (sp) was the cream of the crop. they were like the commanders of the militia. they were these young idealists uh, who were indoctrinated with uh fervent they were indoctrinated with very strong zionist ideals and they were the macabes and they were really the small group i guess today you would call them commandos. they were quite that sophisticated but thats what they were. they set the tone for that legendary israli soldier. that is you know is very sophisticated, very intelligent. the david and golliath kind of syndrome. very small but very smart. and very strong. so they kind of they were that. um so he volunteered fo that. so my father volenteered for that he was in (???) he went to study which what i understand in those days was looked down at because how could he leave the training and the Pamach???? and all that and he thought he had a future and a life that he had to take care of. and when the war broke out he returned and he um he was a uh officer. he was a captain i believe.

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so in 47 when the war broke out. he returned and by the he was already an officer in this underground militia kind of thing. because it really wasnt really an army yet because it wasnt really a state yet. and he was a commander of a, i forget what the english is, platoon or company. company is bigger right? ok so he was a company commander. and he fought with a Givati (sp) brigade. which is very, Givati (sp) was one of the main brigades of the Hagana (sp) and he uh fought in several places around jerusalem and in the south and one particular operation was called operation Yohow (???) where um it was a very heroic, it was a very heroic battle where they in fact stopped the Egyptian army from driving all the way into Telavive basically. and they opened the way into the Negiv

(???) and that was very important because that's how Israel had access to the Negev (???) and to the south. and then after the war was over he remained in the army and uh he was sent to a military staff college in England which is what all the main officers, you know the young but obviously you know promising young officers were sent to. and the promise of uh to continue the life of an officer and being the part of the enterprise and all that. so anyway he did that

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yes, my grandfather of Aham (sp) who was a member of the council of the national council of the Vlada lumi (sp) he was one of the signers of the Israeli declaration of independence. do you want me to talk about how i discovered that? i didn't know, but i was in school in a civics class and i was just kind of bored looking at the book, and there was a picture of the declaration and you know how the declaration has the fine print and then they got all the scribbling and i'm just kind of trying to decipher different signatures see if i can figure out the names and i come across A Katsnelson. that's interesting Katsnelson and there's 2 ways to write Katsnelson one with a K and one with a Q cause there is also another very important Katsnelson Ben Katsnelson that's another important Zionist leader. like a legendary leader. but this is not him. this is a different signature with a coof(?), the way my family write it. and it said Alef(?) and i'm looking further down to see and it had his name on it and i didn't know it. i was in the sixth grade or something. and i went home and asked my mother was this his signature on the declaration of independence and she said ya. cause you don't really brag about these things you know. you don't make a big thing of these things. it was a duty to be fulfilled not something you brag about. so ya so he was signed on that document.

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couldn't be stronger. couldn't be stronger, by the time i was old enough to understand what was going on, my father was a general. the Israeli army, everything that had to do with the state of Israel was prominent was first before everything and anything, giving to your country was first and foremost. before anything else. and so ya my father was a general he was on the general staff when Ruben (?) was the chief of staff and through that whole period of the early 60's these were the generals that prepared the Israeli army really for the 6 day war and then led it during the 6 day war. and so they became the, the legend, the larger than life, they were the ones, very few people remember the names of anybody in the military before that, but that generation everyone knows the names. that was when it became a symbol. something very unique. the Israeli army suddenly became this legendary thing and if you look back in history, one of those guys said to me once, after my father's funeral he came up and we were talking about the history and who these people were and it was the companies commanders those young men who were company commanders, in 1947, 48, he said this, were the ones who in fact won the war, the Israel independence war, cause they on the ground and they had the initiative and they wouldn't give up and they were filled with ideological zeal and they could lead, you know and they were indoctrinated and they could lead, later on 25 years later these were the men who were the generals who led these early armies into this incredible victory of the 6 day war,

1967. and so these are the same people that was kind of the end of that same circle as far as their military life was concerned. They were all good friends of course and they were uh and they lived in the same places cause military housing was always in certain areas and they worked together so that was the atmosphere in which i grew up.

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well when my father was still in the military, well it wasnt really fear but there was a sense of you have to be a little cautious. not really fear but because this is a special kind of situation. you know, um, but i never really felt any kind of personal...like i was in danger or anything like that. and then i remember as a child after the war, we would go, and you know, as a boy of 5 when your dad's a general and you get picked up and dropped off in this big beautiful military car and you know that kind of stuff and all the medals and everything of course thats huge. so right after the war we used to go every saturday night we'd go into the old city to this special place where they would make these Arabic bagels that was something wed do and then after that as a kid on sat morning we would go to the old city just to kind of wander around the streets. something to do, sometimes on friday night wed go for a walk there, you know it was a place you went to, to look around, it wasnt anything beyond that. and um.

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didnt have any personal contact with any palastinian at all and then when i was in high school i became acquainted with a little club that was put together by a gentlemen whose name i forget, who wanted who could wanted this israli youth center, i guess. and a friend of mine went there and he brought me and that was the first time i really met kids my age who were arabs or palastinians. nobody said the word palastinian by the way, it was always arab. we can talk about the reasons behind that now, 30 years later 25 years later but you always said arab, nobody ever said palastinians. that was my first contact and we would go once a week twice a week and we sit, wed hang around, wed talk, wed do things together, we you know, it was a nice little place, i used to go there for a couple years, i was a part of that, and then it fell apart i cant remember why. but that was my first contact and really my only contact and then when it, when that closed i really didnt have any contact with palestinians at all.

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well growing up i mean they were scary. Growing up the arabs were the enemy they were scary, they were the people that put bombs and wanted to kill isralis and the jews that was about it. the word faktah (sp) fadyuh (sp) these were the words that meant enemy. the worst of the worst these were people that we feared, these are the people that we fought, these were the people you know, now looking back i know that these particular words relate to the palestinians. i dont think i ever feared an egyptian you know or anything like that, but there was this sense that the arabs were against us, and they were the enemy, clearly. now it was kind of strange, my father spoke arabic. during his military life he changed his subject of study from law....it was made clear to me he

wasnt going to become an attorney and he started studying arabic he was the israli, after the finite campaign in 1957 he became the israli armies military gov of gaza. and as such he started studying arabic and learning about the culture and so forth. and he became, later on he became a teacher of arabic literature. and so i remember him as a child, he would come home at night with his uniform still on, sitting by the radio, listening to speeches in arabic. you know so i would hear arabic at home. and then his library had a study. it was a huge library. and there were lots of books in arabic. there was arabic everywhere. and I always thought that Arabic lettering, Arabic declaration, the food it always seemed very beautiful to me, very enticing. very interesting, very beautiful. i was um kind of a child, that was my impression

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well like i said, my father's view on the israli relationship in arab in general or israli in general, is whatever is good for the country is what needs to be done. and he had the ability to think to look forward, to think ahead. to strategize. and from what i heard he realized having been in the military, governer of gaza that there was a unique situation there. these people were not like egyptians. not like the (?). they were their own people. and i understand that at one point he thought that i mean i know that he thought israel shouldnt give it back to egypt. what he thought cause he was the young officer , maybe he was a colonal by then, was that perhaps these people could be given some kind of independence and would be kind of a bridge between us and the arab world. but you know nobody thought in those terms politically. and besides the americans said out and that meant out and that was it, the americans demand the isralis leave and give back gaza imidiately within a year it was all determined. it wasnt really that relevent. but i think, theres no question that his study of arabic and his understanding of the language and so forth had a lot to do with his understanding of what could be done between those relationships, between the two people.

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i dont know if there was a change between his thinking or the military solution reverses the peace process. i think at a certain point, it was clear that there was no one to talk. nobody wanted peace with israel. israel was stuck in the middle east and they just wanted to cough it out. after 1967, after the 6 day war things changed, everybody says that that was really the ?. that was the point where things changed. so there was a willingness maybe not a willingness but certainly a sense that israel was there to stay, therefore there was an opportunity to make peace. and i think what he felt as a military man, israel won this war, completely obliterated the arab armies, completely won a huge military victory, lets turn this into a political victory by forcing peace on everybody. lets make peace, were strong weve got all the land, weve got all the cards in our hand. lets make peace. no need to negotiate anything, weve got all this power here lets use it and benefit israel. and he understood his sense was that strategically the best thing for israel was not all this land the best thing for israel was to remain the size that it was but to have peace. because peace is the only guarantee for security. placing peace somehow at the opposite end of security is ludicrous. and uh he told me that on the 5th day of the war he

already suggested this ? who was his immediate boss, the chief of staff, and other people. but everybody at that point was like what are you talking about we just won all this land, give it back? who should we? and then he remained in the army for another year before he retired. as soon as he retired he started writing and talking about to use this incredible advantage that we gained through the war, our military might to make peace. but that was kind of, i dont know it was really a transition, it was strategic thinking that didnt really leave him. he didnt stop being a general. he was retired for 30 years before he passed away he would never stop being a general. he would never stop for one minute and think israel should give up his army or anything like that. this was who he was, and this was part of his personality and his life. it would never go away but the circumstances changed and therefore the strategy to maintain israel as an independent jewish secular state had to change. this was it. this was the way.

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yes he was and um he was one of in israel like i said all these key words that reflected the palastinian situation but really didnt understand ? what is that? what a horrible word. these monsters. now we ? is a main stream palastinian national movement and so forth. and then they became the PLO. and PLO in hebrew is ashaf. and he started at some point saying it was in the early 70s i believe it was after 1973. im not sure if it was before or after the war. but he started saying that israel needed to start negotiating, open the door and start negotiating with ashaf and the PLO and that was insane that was just insane it was almost as insane as i dont know what, it was insane it was unthinkable. ashaf with the PLO thats the enemy thats the worst of the worst. they are terrorists they want to kill us they want to throw us in the ocean. really it was just a small group of gurilla fighters, not really a threat to israel. but this was the image, PLO ashaf the bad guys. we dont talk to them and he started talking about them and he would go around and give speeches all around the country. people would invite him to speak, he would write articles in the paper, this was his thing, people thought he went mad. people stopped talking to him and people thought he went mad and people that knew him as a general, he was quite a ? as a general, he pushed for the war and all that kind of stuff, couldnt really understand what had happened. so thats why i thought i should talk about his military career. should i talk about it now? its kind of disjointed.

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well, in the month that led to the 6 day war, the israli government didnt want to start a war, they were scared. ?, the prime minister, who was in charge. he was the defense minister as well. he didnt want the war. the israli army pushed for war, wanted war. but there was what was called a generals coup, a meeting at the military headquarters with the government and several of the generals, my father being one of them, stood up and said we need to start this war and we need to start this now. and they really pushed. called the generals coup and they demanded war and he was one of them that demanded the war start immediately so that they could you know later on he was the first man to say lets stop the PLO and create a ? sololutin. a lot of people it was difficult for them to make that connection, the same man could say this and this, so anyway the impression

that it made on people when he started talking about the ? the people that knew him in his previous life thought it was strange, they didnt understand the kind of thinking he had which was strategic. what is best for israel at this point? what will insure israli security for the future. so that was strange for people, thats why i say its relevant, that particular story the fact that he was part of the coup. and people that knew him that were still friends with him for many years, everytime we meet they say aw you should have seen him, you shoudl have seen him bang the table to demand war. you shoudl have seen it. this is something that followed him his whole life. i dont think he regreted it or anything like that. in his mind at the time it was the right thing to do. but then going back to the connection with the PLO so he started talking about that and then himself and a group of other israli's. zionist israli's in oppose to the israli communists who had connections with PLO. zionist isralis created an organization called the israli council for an israli palestinian peace. and within a couple of months they were contacted through a couple of jewish people that lived in france. they were contacted by the PLO representatives in paris, ??? and by the PLO representative in london who was ?, both of who were assassinated later on by extremists, palestinian extremists. and the connection between, ? was killed very shortly after that, the connection went for many years, he was killed in 82 i believe in portugal. um that connection was incredible, incredible, they would call, they would meet they would go to paris, they would have these discussions on the palestinian this was an official palestinian representative, on the israli side these were people that held positions in the past but they didnt represent anyone at the time and um i remember when my father would come back he would always report to ravibe (?) who was at that time prime minister, and i remember one time being taken to a house, talk about security, the prime minister comes to visit your house, cause they were friends, they knew eachother well, they had a lot of history together, they worked together for many many years, anyway there were secret service all over and anyway they would talk and he would report everytime to the prime minister what went on and the possibilities, and he thought and rabine thought at that time that the israli nation was just naive that these guys that the participants like my father were all naive, there was no chance these people didnt want peace. i think rabine mentions that in one of his books saying that you know ? they were misled by the palestinians. but anyway this connection went on for many many years. i remember as a child they would call and ? as a friend call the house in paris and i would pick up, this is a friend calling but i knew they were calling for my dad, it was him, and there was also a close friendship there, there was also something else in the background. so this went on for many many years. so he was killed in 82 in portugal at the meeting of international socialists organization. it was live on TV practically i remember watching and calling my dad in his study, you saw the corpse lying there in the lobby of the hotel. besides the politics they became good friends as well, but it didnt stop, the connection didnt stop and they later on met with ? and they would meet people like bruno cristsky? who was chancelor of austria. and other prominent jews around europe who bring these people together from differnt places and ? from spain and different places to get together and try to create something cause they saw that there were possibilities. these were not communist isralis french people these were people with a lot of respect. again this went on until he passed away.

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ok my father was miko peled um when he passed away in 1995, his funeral was incredible, an incredible incredible event. in fact i think when someone prominent passes away you know the press, there was an unprecedented number of articles and commentaries and reviews not just in israel but around the world about his death about his life about his work and his but nothing was as incredible as the funeral, because you had people it was not a state funeral it was a military funeral. with full honors, but we didnt hold it, my mother didnt want it in the military cemetery so hes burried in ? just outside jerusalem. which is where he fought, where he lived, a place he liked. and um so the prime minister was there who was rubine at the time. um, the president was there who was vistmyer? they were close friends, they were generals together in 1967, they remained friends, um in fact when he died, the news of his death was announced on the news, the first person to be interviewed was vistmyer he said he was a man who knew to bang on the table in time for war, and to bang on the table when the time for peace. so anyway they were there. and the coffin was carried by six other israli generals. current generals. and those the whole group of generals there was an appology of the israli military that was the genearl of 1967. artie sherone (?) was there he was one of them, he was younger but he was one of them. all of the military people were tehre. and then there were representatives of the PLO were there. ? was there. i think i have a picture from the newspaper where there is the state wreath by the israli president right next to the wreath of president arafat. and this is a military funeral of an israli general. this is unreal. and of course everyone in the peace movement were there. um people like ? were there. cause he was, his second career was he taught arabic literature in israli universities. and so it was an incredible sight. there were, there were speeches made in arabic, speeches made in hebrew, speeches made by israli state representatives, speeches made by palestinian state representatives. i dont know that anything like that has ever happened before or since. but it was just an incredible event and the number of articles and commentators that came out after his death unprecidented. i can show you a book its like this, you know the things that we kept. so it was, it was a reflection of the person that he was and the kind of life that he led and the fact that he presented possibilities that people never thought could, were there. he probably was, i mean there was no question he was ahead of his time and he paid the price for that but um ? who was a speaker, spoke at his funeral. and he said heres a man who swam for so many years against the current and ended up leading the current. this was 1995. this was right after Oslo all this opptimism peace seemed to be right around the corner and so on. although in all fairness i was say with that the last article that he wrote he named a requium to Oslo, because he read the document and thought it presented more obstacles then possibilities. turned out that he was right in that as well.

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what was important was the state of Israel. and so at a ceratin point in time what was important was to have the military and be a military man. later on as as reality changed it became more important to pursue peace and thats what guided him it was the good of the country the good of the states. that was his thing and so he would say that they are equally important.

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I want to say something about my mother too. something just came to my mind. we talked about earlier in the years my impression of arabs and things like that and the whole idea of peace and all that. theres a story that she i remember even as a child hearing from her and that was that when during 1948 the war for independence my dad was in the fronts and lived in jerusalem in a small house that her mother built that her parents built in Jerusalem a small house and she lived there with them, with my older brother and sister, who were young children then, they were probably 2 and 3 years old. with my grandmother in a single house a small house no fun i can guarantee it. very very little, and as jerusalem was under seige but as the war went on and the israli forces, the israli malitia were taking more and more and more of west jerusalem because a lot of west jerusalem was made up of arab neighborhoods, palestinian neighborhoods, beautiful houses that are still there to this day, the most beautiful homes in jerusalem, west jerusalem, that are all what we call arab houses homes built by palestinian families.

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so anyway so there so the israli forces are winning in the war and they are taking more and more neighborhoods in west jerusalem and the arab family ??. and as the arab families are leaving their homes these homes that they offered to the israli families the jewish families, and so she was offered a home like that. you know she was the wife of an officer, she was more deserving then anyone else. and she said she couldnt, she refused, she said she couldnt live in the home of another family. the family just just just over, across the border and she said they would come into these homes and take everything the furniture the rugs, everything, she said as a child, she wasnt a child, she was a young woman, everything was rationed there was no gas for the cars and suddenly people had trucks full of gas and they were taking all th stuff all this loot and she wondered where did they get the gas you know how could they do this you know cause they would go right by their house with the trucks. and so anyway her sense was she was offered a home a palestinian home and she refused it and to this day shes happy that she had the foresight. its a real basic humanitarian kind of a sense its another womans home, how could i take another womans home. anyway i think its relevent to the whole peace thing and all that

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well growing up in the kind of atmosphere that i did uh you have to understand that the legend that i told talked about earlier the pomat?? and everything the military service, there was no question that i was going to serve, and there was no question that i was going to volunteer to be, to look exactly like those legends and this legend of the pomat?? was later perpetuated was later made bigger by these israli paratrooper the isralie paratrooper brigade, they were awesome, besides the fact that they had red barets, and special shoes and all this insignias and everything that was awesome they were heros they did the impossible, they killed bad guys and they trained hard and they were the epitomy

of israeli men there was nothing any boy no boy would want anything more then to be that you know every israeli boy growing up its probably true to this day, people still volunteer for all these units because of that so you know so i did too so i voluteered for a special comando unit, i went through all the hard training, got my red beret and the whole thing, um this was 1980, i enlisted in 1980 and then about a year or so after that I hurt my knee and had to have knee surgery and so i wasnt able to go back to my unit so i was sent back to learn how to be a ?? a medic and so at the academy where they taught us that, i later on remained of course a very long course several months long and so i remained as an instructor at the academy and i couldnt go back to my unit anyway but having been out of it for several months and the new reality the fact that this was 1981 approaching 1982, things were different in israel politically. i couldnt quite justify going back and doing that you know, military kind of you know life and so i remained and became an instructor and the remainder of my service i did at that base teaching medics being an instructor of course and then a year later lebanon was started, i wasnt asked to go i didnt need to go but there was no question in my mind if i would not have gone to lebanon i would have refused. there was no question in my mind even for a second that i would have refused. some people have to go because they needed more medics and things like that i remained and luckily i wasnt asked to go so i didnt get in trouble so the whole thing wasnt an issue. um, and thats it, i ended my service there after 3 years

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he already accepted it, he was against the war from the first day, in fact there is a video clip of him somewhere because there was a rally against the war, and he spoke at the rally very early on and in his speech he said this is the first time in israel history that an anti war rally was going on while the troops are fighting that had never happened in history, in israeli short history, but still the people would rally against the war while the troops were fighting and so to him um refusing to go to lebanon he would have accepted particularly well, it in fact it was probably his messages growing up that would have put me in that frame of mind but even as a young adult i understood there was nothing for us to do there.

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um, i didnt, well i did serve in the west bank it was almost all the army bases and the trainging took place in the west bank. the first year, the other 2 years later on it was in israel ?? um it wasnt an issue, no it wasnt an issue, i wouldnt have done it today, theres no way i would have done it today, this was back 22 years ago, there was really nothing to do there. you know, we served on the bases, we patrolled sometimes, kept guards but there was nothing nothing the army was involved in, nothing like today, not even close you know um so it wasnt an issue no

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oh yeah well everybody knew who my dad was when i was enlisted because of the name and everything and anyone that knows anything in israel knew who he was certainly the

more uh the more senior officers and most of the time it was find because it wasn't really an issue, but at one point i had a commanding officer that was a real idiot and he was politically very loud and so and i wasn't alone, we had several friends we all grew up along the same life politically and so and the atmosphere on the base that i served as an instructor, the instructors were very independent and that's one of the reasons we were there, we were independent minded people. that was the kind of you know that was the kind of place that it was, it was like MASH, i compare it to MASH but um so he was the only one that would get on my case, but I would never talk back to him I remember at one point that I was ashamed that i was ashamed that he didn't live in one of the settlements in the territories and he fell for it and said why and i said because when they return them they would return you with them anyway and so this was the atmosphere but he was the only one that ever made it a problem. of course he was my commanding officer for a very long time. it was not pleasant

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oh there were, every foul word under then sun, every foul word under the sun and someone with that mentality you know he was a luitenant colonal or something or a major, generals were ??, you know generals would come to the base for inspections i think it happened once in the whole time that i served i mean these guys scuse me they ?? to them generals were god, so heres the son of a general and he doesnt fit any of these, any of the criteria that he should, he should be loyal, militaristic, he should want to become an officer, he should want to do this he should want to fight, you know and hes this guy thats talking about peace hes a peacemaker, you know so what the hell is going on here? so they couldnt quite, so it was really difficult i think emotionally for people like that, the placement wasn't right you know, it didnt sit in the right place that came and went as well. it was very tough looking back, it was a tough period.

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ok so um sept. the 4th 1997 there were 2 suicide bombers blew themselves up 2 young palestinians i would rather say it differently, on sept the 4th 1997 2 young palestinians blew themselves up in jerusalem, and they took their own lives and the lives of 5 isralis and one of those 5 isralis was my 13 year old neice sazari hala ?? and its interesting how i learned about it. my mother had just returned from a trip, from a visit here, she was with us for a month and she went back to israel, she landed the day before, no she landed the very day and she expected sazari to meet her at the airport but she had to go downtown to do something and she met her death, and so im watching this on CNN and it always happens, anything happens i call home to make sure everyones OK and so im watching this and my mother calls and this is really weird and cause it never happens they never call me when something happens, im always the one that calls this for many many years it was the pattern. so she calls me and says we dont know where sazari is. shes mising and we dont know where she is, were looking for her and being the optimist that i am i was like well shes probably at a friends house she didnt think to call home you know theres all this chaos, traffic jams because of the bombings and all that and as the day progresses im in touch on the phone with her but more with my other sister

not so much sazaris mother, but my sister and they are going from friend to friend from place to place from hospital to hospital there is not a word so at some point i call my travel agent whos an israli and i say look if there is a problem i may need to fly tomorrow so then this is the next day already and im on my way to work and im driving to north county i have some business up there and im on the 15 and im on the phone with israel and im on the phone with a travel agent and finally it was midnight there that the police came and took my sister and brother in law and two good friends from work and they identified her so then i had a call from my other sister that this was in fact sazari and so they arranged for me to fly the next day. and um do you want the details, you know i can go on about this story its interesting how the little details become significant, my passport was expired, my israli passport expired so i had to go to the israli consulate in LA to get it a new passport well that takes days well not in a situation like this so i drove up to LA i went right up to the consulate general it was the consulate general's office. he gave me a passport right on the spot and they knew that they were waiting for me for the funeral in Israel. so i arrived the next day in Israel you know the burial is right away, a jewish burial is right away within 24 hours so they waited, and so i landed, i think it was like 5 am, my brother picked me up took me home and we drove over to my sister's house, the morning paper was laid out and the headline on the frontpage was the grand daughter of general Pele, a victim of palestinian terrorism. um i mean what do you do, how do you knock on the door, how do you knock on the door, my sister has 4 children, shes the ultimate mother being a mother, their family is wonderful, their kids were everything, their family was everything you know it was everything, the most wonderful children, you know how do you even knock on the door but we did and we hugged and cried and the funeral was that afternoon and she was buried right beside my father in the same place and um again it was a long caravan leading from jerusalem to meshun?? which is right on the outskirts of jerusalem and the people there, and just several days before that princess diana was killed and elton john came out with this wonderful new adaptation of candle in the wind, just bizarre, that was strange as i flew in stopping in london, everyone was talking about diana and the funeral and all that kind of stuff, everybody was really sad, i remember my mother was thinking diana was killed just a couple of days earlier. anyway so then um and then the song was on the radio as we were driving cause they had all these vans for us as we driving through the cemetary. (interruption)

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so then um so anyway the radio was on and that song was playing, i remember that, so anyway the people that came to the funeral again all the people that knew my father, the representatives from the palestinian authority, ??, representatives from the israli peace movement, my brother in law rami had a business and he worked with many people that were settlers, ?? so there were a whole host of them, who were friends with him and um you know her older brother, all her friends, her oldest brother edic was in the military then again he was in one of these commando units so the whole unit was there, the commander was there everybody was there, in their full gear and their you know semi automatics, red barets and all that. the palestinians were all there, you know they had come. just as kind of a serious, kind of a gathering from the far right to the far left, to the military to the peace movement, everybody and um her other other older brother a

musician had his band there and they sang songs that they wrote about her and her nanny was palastinian her nannys daughter was about the same age and she was there with her friend and i mean what do you say what do you do i mean you know as you got out of the van they grabbed me to carry the coffin, you know the 6 of my cousin, myself, several other people and uh carrying a small coffin let me tell you its just totally insane its just totally insane i mean you carry a coffin of an old man you see an old man passing away its very sad, if its your father no question but when your 72 and youve had a good long life its sad but its differenet when a 13 year old girl dies nobody can make any sense of it, any sense of it at all and then um the in the jewish tradition you sit for 7 days in mourning and everybody comes to the house during the 7 days and brings food and sits with the family and so on and they lived in the same house that my grand parents built in ??, later on they added another story and they lived in the upstairs on the second story which we used to live when we lived in the house and now my sister lives there and so that was it small apartment not very big, not by american standards anyway, and theres a little back yard and everbody came i mean the whole world came i mean that house from 6am to 10pm was packed. half the people were reporters from every nation from every newspaper and every television station you can think of anyone from bob simon to all the cnn people to the french and the italians, everybody all the time and my brother in law on the 2nd day after the first night of the funeral he got out of his room and he said thats it, thats it, im not going to be locked up in this darkness and then he came up and he said, i mean without even a hint of a doubt their daughters death was cause by the israli occupation the palestiniens without a doubt, the people responsible for her death were the israli government, the israli policy, the israli army, we have to make peace we have to get out of this territory, we have to end the occupation, treat people like this long enough they are going to do this and so that message echoed all over the world and so more press would come and more press came, im telling you it was unbelievable.